

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, and 17-21 are active in the present application.

At the outset, Applicants wish to thank Examiner Flood for the indication that Claim 3 is allowable (February 25, 2005 Office Action, page 4, last paragraph).

The rejections of Claims 1 and 2 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over Maruyuma et al (AX), Saito et al (AY), Dziuba et al (U), Saito et al (AO), Saito et al (AP), Saito et al (AQ), and Miyoshi et al (V) are obviated by amendment.

Consistent with the Examiner's indication that the limitations of Claim 3 are free from the art of record, Applicants have amended Claim 1 to include the limitations of Claim 3 and all intervening claims from which it depends. Accordingly, Claims 1 and 2 should now be allowable.

Withdrawal of these grounds of rejection is requested.

Applicants note that pending Claims 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, and 17-21 depend from Claim 1. As such, Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, and 17-21 relate to a single general inventive concept because they possess the same or corresponding special technical feature that defines the contribution that the claimed invention, considered as a whole, makes over the prior art. The contribution of Claim 1 over the prior art (i.e. novelty) is conceded by the Examiner by virtue of the indication that original Claim 3 is allowable (February 25, 2005 Office Action, page 4, last paragraph).

Applicants wish to remind the Examiner that MPEP §1893.03 (d) states that:

A group of inventions is considered linked to form a single general inventive concept where there is a technical relationship among the inventions that involves at least one common or corresponding special technical feature. The expression special technical features is defined as meaning those technical features that define the contribution which each claimed invention, considered as a whole, makes over the prior art.

Therefore, in view of the fact that Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, and 17-21 do share a common technical feature the criteria (the prolylendopeptidase-inhibitive agent of Claim 1) and it is this feature that makes a novel contribution over the prior art, unity of invention is satisfied.

As such, Claims 4, 5, 7, 8, 11, 13, and 17-21 should be rejoined and subsequently allowed along with Claims 1 and 2. An indication to this effect is requested.

Applicants submit that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Early notification of such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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